IN THE CLAIMS

10. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a tungsten carbide comprising gas phase carburization of tungsten powders and/or suitable tungsten precursor compound powders at a temperature ranging from 850°C to 950°C, wherein the carburizing gas phase used is a CO_2/CO mixture with a CO_2 content which is above the Boudouard equilibrium content corresponding to the carburization temperature, and wherein the carburization is carried out with a carbon activity ranging from 0.4 to less than 1, wherein the process further comprises subjecting the tungsten carbide made by the process to a heat treatment at a temperature ranging from 1,150°C to 1,800°C after carburization, thereby forming the tungsten carbide.

11. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 10, wherein carburization is carried out with a carbon activity ranging from 0.4 to 0.9.

12. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the carburization temperature ranges from 900°C to 950°C.

13. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the carburization is carried out at the carburization temperature over a period ranging from 4 to 10 hours.

14. (Previously Presented) The process according to Claim 10, wherein the precursor compound is tungsten oxide powder.

15. (Currently Cancelled)